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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/SPG, AF/RSA, AND IO/UNP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AU](#) [SU](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: AU SUMMIT: AF ACTING A/S CARTER MEETS WITH CHINESE
DIPLOMAT ZHAI JUN

Classified By: AMBASSADOR DONALD YAMAMOTO, REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) Summary: On January 30, AF Acting Assistant Secretary Phillip Carter met with Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister for Africa Zhai Jun on the margins of the AU Summit. Zhai was chiefly interested in trying to talk the United States out of its stated opposition to a UN Security Council Article XVI deferral of the International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment of Sudanese President Bashir. Carter explained that the responsibility to change words into action lies with the Sudanese government. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Zhai, speaking through an interpreter, opened the meeting by noting that while Africa is for the most part experiencing a positive renewal, challenges remain. These include not only political violence in Kenya and Zimbabwe and military coups in Mauritania and Guinea, but energy and food security and the effects on Africa of the global financial crisis. He noted that he had worked extensively with the Bush Administration on Africa and was looking forward to continuing this close relationship, working together to promote development and stability in Africa, with the Obama Administration.

¶3. (C) Carter said that while there will be inevitable adjustments, the Obama Administration can be expected to continue the general commitment towards Africa which has characterized the previous Administrations, and looks forward to working with China to promote transparency, good governance, and stability in Africa. The USG shares China's concerns on global issues such as responsible resource management, addressing food insecurity, and economic reform in Africa.

¶4. (C) In response to Carter's question about the potential for future cooperation on health and agriculture in Liberia, Ethiopia, and Ghana which was raised in an October 2008 meeting in Beijing, Zhai responded that the best approach would be to instruct Ambassadors resident in those countries to compare notes and come up with ideas, then have them report back respectively to Washington and Beijing. When Carter thanked Zhai for providing Chinese naval escorts off the coast of Somalia and asked him about the possibility of cooperation with the United States and other nations on Combined Task force 150, Zhai noted that China had participated in the Contact Group in New York and believed that this was a good forum to explore future cooperation to combat piracy, including information sharing and personnel exchanges. He also stated that ship escorts are really just attacking the symptom. However, in order to combat the disease, a land solution is required. Carter strongly agreed.

15. (C) Turning to Sudan, Zhai said that the ICC arrest warrant for President Bashir could be issued as early as the first week of February. This will not be helpful to Darfur, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between North and South, or general elections. Sudan is on fire -- you need water, not oil, to put out a fire. Zhai noted that China has sent peacekeeping troops to Darfur and has encouraged cooperation on UNAMID deployment, and Zhai said he had met personally with Bashir on numerous occasions in an effort to get him to cooperate. He asked the United States to "at least not openly support the ICC," and said that the permanent member of the UN Security Council should have a clear understanding of the consequences of an ICC indictment. He said further that he had already met with many African ministers in Addis, and many were furious with the ICC indictment.

16. (C) Carter thanked Zhai for China's efforts to encourage a measured, prudent response to an eventual ICC indictment of Bashir, noting that the USG is delivering a similar message. He encouraged China to press Sudan to commit to a universal cease-fire and a functioning UN monitoring mechanism, as well as to have China push Sudan to develop a proposal amenable to the rebel movements for a political settlement on Darfur. Carter urged China to engage the US, UK, and France in the UNSC to develop a common view and approach to the question of Sudan and the need of the Sudanese government to meet its obligations in resolving the Darfur crisis and implementing the CPA as well. Zhai indicated that his government would work with the P5 towards this objective. Regarding the ICC arrest warrant, Carter noted that nothing had really changed on the ground in Darfur to move the USG from its stated

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position not to support a deferral by the UNSC. Carter concluded by noting that at this point for Bashir and the Government of Sudan, actions are more important than words.

17. (U) A/S Carter reviewed a copy of this message before departing post.
YAMAMOTO